

Rockhill Iron and Coal Company Store
6-8 N. Main Street
Robertsdale
Huntingdon County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5554

HABS
PA,
31-RODA,
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Rockhill Iron and Coal Company Store

HABS No. PA-5554

Location: Main and Cliff streets, Robertsdale, Huntingdon County, Pa.

History and Description: Built in 1874-75, the company store was one of the first structures erected in Robertsdale, and the only one constructed entirely of stone. Located in the center of Robertsdale, at the corner of Main and Cliff streets opposite the railroad tracks, the store is extant today, a 28' x 65', two-story, gable-end building fronting north Main Street and a one-story ell on the north side for offices.

Although always known as the "company store," it was never really operated by the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company. According to 1911 Immigration Commission reports, Pennsylvania law prohibited coal companies from operating their own stores. The company would thus lease the store to a merchant who paid the company a percentage of the profits. The system apparently benefited the company, since the store contract forced the merchant to operate his business on a credit system, and he had to pay the company whether or not he actually received the money from the customers.

A number of people operated the Robertsdale company store in the early years of the community. One of the first was Dr. Lewis Royer, a long-time Broad Top area resident and a business associate of the company founders. According to 1880-90s tax records, Royer was employed as a clerk and later as a storekeeper. His good standing with the Rockhill company is indicated by the fact that between 1883 and 1898 Royer owned a relatively expensive house in town.

Project Information and Sources: This report was part of a larger project to document the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company towns of Robertsdale and Woodvale in Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP). For an overview history of the towns that provides the significance and context for this building as well as a comprehensive list of sources see HABS Nos. PA-5553, PA-5484, and PA-5485. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in each town.

Project historian Lola Bennett completed the research and writing for this project during summer 1989 under the direction of Alison K. Hoagland, senior HABS historian. Bennett's work was published as The Company Towns of the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company: Robertsdale and Woodvale, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990). Illustrations in the publication include 35mm photographs taken by Bennett; large-format photographs taken by HAER photographer Jet Lowe; and historic photographs from the collections of Thomas L. Matthews, Kenneth Morgan, Ron Morgan, and the Huntingdon County Historical Society. The publication was compiled and edited by HABS historians Kim E. Wallace and Sara Amy Leach. Contemporary 35mm and historic photographs used in the publication as well as other miscellaneous research materials were transmitted to the AIHP collection at Stapleton Library, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Pa.